

Created in Love

Mother Teresa once said, “Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty”.

Recently, a story of loneliness caught the eye of the media:

Last year, on a cold December day, Han Zicheng decided to write a note.

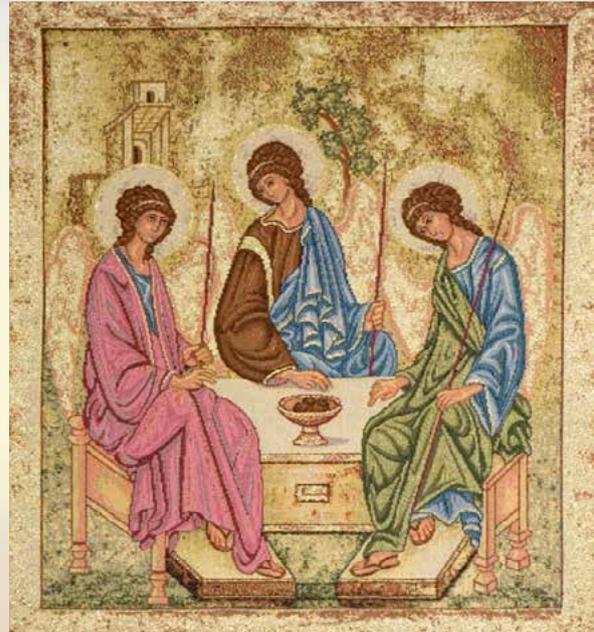
“Lonely old man in his 80s. Strong-bodied. Can shop, cook and take care of himself. No chronic illness. I retired from a scientific research institute in Tianjin, with a monthly pension of 6,000 RMB (\$A1200) a month.

“I won’t go to a nursing home. My hope is that a kind-hearted person or family will adopt me, nourish me through old age and bury my body when I’m dead.”

Psychologist John Cacioppo, at the University of Chicago, a researcher into loneliness, defines it as a “debilitating psychological condition characterised by a deep sense of emptiness, worthlessness, lack of control and personal threat”. He believes loneliness is partly hereditary – and an important evolutionary tool. “This pain served to prompt us to renew the connections we need to ensure survival and promote social trust, cohesiveness, and collective action,” he says. Cacioppo believes, loneliness is an indicator of our society’s health, allowing us to measure how well we are integrated.

As we celebrate Trinity Sunday we might ask – could we be as integrated as the Holy Trinity? We have much to learn about connection through the Trinity. “God is one but not solitary.” “Father”, “Son”, “Holy Spirit” are not simply names designating modalities of the divine being, for they are really distinct from one another ... The divine Unity is Triune. The divine persons are relative to one another (CCC 254-255).

This weekend we celebrate that God is a communion of relational love. Bishop Michael Curry’s sermon at the Royal Wedding last weekend (19 May) reiterated, ‘God is Love’.



“Cause when love is the way, we actually treat each other, well, like we are actually family. When love is the way we know that God is the source of us all. And we are brother and sisters, children of God. Brothers and sisters, that’s a new heaven, a new earth, a new world, a new human family ...”

Trinity Sunday reminds us that love is the antidote to loneliness, the reason for life and the heart of our faith. Adopt love!

God loves us in a way that crushes all loneliness and isolation.

– Pope Francis@Pontifex 17 May

References: <http://www.news.com.au/world/asia/lonely-old-man-wanted-to-be-adopted-because-he-was-afraid-of-dying-alone/news-story/e557bee75d49035e53387ecf6a841861>; <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/jan/22/the-loneliness-epidemic>

REFLECTION

- > When do I feel connected with others?
- > In what communities do I feel at home?